

FOR PSA MEMBERS: KWAZULU-NATAL DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

08-05-2020

FEEDBACK: Virtual Meeting with Head of Health in KZN - 7 May 2020

Availability: Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) in KZN Health Institutions

The PSA in the meeting raised concerns about the shortage of PPE in KZN health institutions. The employer reported that they have taken a decision to centralize the procurement process of PPE at KZN head office in SCM. Equipment will then be delivered at head office and distributed to district offices and the district offices will then allocate to different institutions. The districts will monitor the distribution in the institutions and the employer will confirm compliance in the provision of PPE. Members are requested to provide details to PSA where there is a lack/shortage in the provision of PPE.

Staff contracting COVID-19

The employer indicated that there are quarantine and isolation facilities available for the staff who are tested positive in all districts. The turnaround time for the results to be made available to the employees who have symptoms of COVID-19 will be closely monitored.

Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) / Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)

PSA raised concerns regarding the failure by the department to conduct deep cleaning, screening of employees, observing of social distancing and recalling 100 percent of staff compliment in some of the institutions. This is contrary to the 30 percent of staff that was due to return to work at level 4 of the lockdown according to the HRM Circular number 14 of 2020 of the KZN Department of Health issued and signed by the Head of Health on the 4 May 2020. The PSA further raised serious concerns that the department is not considering the vulnerable employees with chronic medical conditions and those who are above the age of 60 by forcing them to work while the department is fully aware that these employees are a high risk to contracting the Coronavirus. PSA will not compromise the safety of its members by allowing the department to continue violating regulations of COVID-19.

The employer will develop guidelines for the OHS for COVID-19 to protect employees. Those guidelines will include the issue of a screening tool and training on how to utilize PPE, how to manage the employees with symptoms of COVID-19 and the OHS committees and the EAP to be utilized to provide employees support during this crises. The PSA raised concerns that these committees do not exist in some of the institutions and thus need to be revived at institutional, district and provincial level. PSA requested that organised labour be included in these OHS committees. This was endorsed by the Head of Health.

Monthly Virtual Engagement with Organise Labour

The PSA welcomes the proposal by the HOD that continuous engagement will be monthly so that pressing issues can be addressed. The PSA also raised that the MEC be part of these meetings since some of the issues are political in nature and it requires the MEC to respond.

Stanger Hospital

The PSA is invited to a special meeting scheduled to take place on 11 May 2020 to discuss the issues affecting Stanger Hospital.

Ntunjambili Hospital

The PSA wanted to know what was the decision taken on the Ntunjambili Hospital matter since there was public who were protesting against the decision of keeping the positive covid-19 patient. The employer reported that they have met with the traditional leaders and the local government to resolve the Ntunjambili Hospital issue and the department instituted the investigation and parties will be informed once the investigation has been finalized.

For assistance members can contact Charles Ngubane on 082 880 8989 or Gillian Hassan on 082 880 8998.

Members must also visit the PSA website www.psa.co.za for media statements and other editions of Informus for more information.

GENERAL MANAGER